



Department of Homeland Security Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report for 18 December 2007

Current Nationwide



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- According to USA Today, a recent midair jet engine failure that sent metal chunks exploding with violent force is prompting federal investigators to debate the need for tougher engine safety standards. The investigation has only just begun, but one possible outcome is a finding that existing protections on engines are not sufficient to prevent metal shards from being flung out of a damaged engine. (See item [12](#))
- The Los Angeles Times reports that the guilty pleas announced Friday in the JIS case represented an important win for the Justice Department. Authorities said the foiled plot posed a real and immediate threat, as the audacious scheme to attack more than a dozen military centers, synagogues, and other sites in Southern California was within 60 days of launching. (See item [23](#))

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Energy Sector

Current Electricity Sector Threat Alert Levels: **Physical: ELEVATED, Cyber: ELEVATED**

Scale: LOW, GUARDED, ELEVATED, HIGH, SEVERE [Source: ISAC for the Electricity Sector (ES-ISAC) – <http://www.esisac.com>]

1. *December 17, Associated Press* – (National) **Oil prices fall on economic worries.** Oil prices fell Monday as concerns about the U.S. economy overrode expectations of increased fuel demand from a winter storm pummeling the United States with snow, sleet and freezing rain. Prices initially opened higher, in response to the wintry conditions. Light sweet crude for January delivery had shed 48 cents to \$90.79 a barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Brent crude fell 31 cents, going for \$91.38 a barrel on London's ICE Futures exchange. Worries about the state of

the U.S. economy already affected the market Friday, when the contract fell 98 cents to settle at \$91.27 a barrel after Washington reported inflation jumping in November by the largest amount in more than two years. Energy traders are concerned that rising inflation will cut consumers' buying power and reduce demand for gasoline and oil. They also worry that higher inflation means the Federal Reserve will stop cutting interest rates. Many analysts cite the Fed's recent rate-cutting campaign, and its role in depressing the value of the dollar, as a major factor behind oil's rise in November to a record above \$99 a barrel. Heating oil futures slipped marginally to fetch \$2.6066 a gallon (3.8 liters) while gasoline prices lost over a penny, selling for \$2.33 a gallon. Natural gas futures lost a tad, trading for \$7.020 per 1,000 cubic feet.

Source: <http://ap.google.com/article/ALeqM5i5TtajgUpSm7KY5jf-ICJGHBB-tAD8TJ61LG0>

2. *December 17, Reuters* – (Wyoming) **Frontier cuts rates at Cheyenne after fire.** Frontier Oil Corp said on Monday it will cut rates to the 52,000 barrel per day crude unit at its refinery in Cheyenne, Wyoming, after a fire shut the delayed coking unit and injured two people on Saturday night. A spokesman for the company said the company's preliminary estimate was the crude unit would be running at about 20,000 to 25,000 barrels per day by midday Monday. He said the unit would remain at reduced rates during the coker outage, which was expected to last about a month. The coker unit, which processes heavy fuel oil into distillates and feedstocks for other units, was recently expanded from 10,000 bpd to 13,500 bpd, he said.

Source: <http://www.reuters.com/article/rbssEnergyNews/idUSN1761561220071217>

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Chemical Industry Sector

3. *December 17, WNYW 5 New York* – (New York) **Explosion in Midtown Manhattan.** A man has been burned in a chemical explosion in Midtown Manhattan. The explosion happened at the Fox News building at 1211 Sixth Avenue. About 700 people have been evacuated from the building.

Source:

<http://www.myfoxny.com/myfox/pages/Home/Detail?contentId=5240591&version=1&ocale=EN-US&layoutCode=TSTY&pageId=1.1.1>

4. *December 17, Valley News Dispatch* – (Pennsylvania) **Corporation to pull nuclear waste, leave chemicals.** Although the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has announced final plans to remove more than 50,000 tons of radioactive contamination from a former nuclear waste dump site on Route 66, Western Pennsylvania, there is no plan to deal with chemical pollutants, including heavy metals and dangerous chemical compounds, also at the site. The nuclear burial grounds, known as the Shallow Land Disposal Area, or SLDA, were established in the late 1950s as a dump for nuclear and chemical waste from the Nuclear Materials and Equipment Corp., and its successors, the Atlantic Richfield Company and Babcock & Wilcox with facilities in Apollo and Parks. Although the Corps plans to remove any radioactive materials, including any mixed with other chemicals, it currently has no plans to remove chemicals with no radiological

contamination. That means that some potentially dangerous chemicals, such as benzene, vinyl chloride, trichloroethene, toluene, and ethylbenzene could remain at the site after the cleanup is complete if they are not mixed with radioactive wastes. Cleanup of the 44-acre site, with an estimated total project cost of \$53 million, was taken over by the Corps after public outcry led a representative to introduce legislation in 2001-02 to change federal agency oversight for the project, previously held by the federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission. The cleanup is expected to begin in the summer of 2008 with the re-routing of a gas line and continue until 2013, according to a Corps project manager in Pittsburgh.

Source: http://www.pittsburghlive.com/x/pittsburghtrib/news/cityregion/s_543160.html

5. *December 17, Chemical & Engineering News* – (National) **House examines chemical plant security.** An industry security expert last week urged lawmakers who are tracking chemical plant security to give the Department of Homeland Security and the nation's chemical manufacturers an opportunity to fully implement existing DHS regulations to protect plant sites from terrorist attacks before making big changes. The director of corporate security for BASF joined government officials and a union representative in testifying before the House Committee on Homeland Security's Subcommittee on Transportation Security & Infrastructure Protection, which is tracking the progress of chemical plant security regulations DHS issued on April 2. By law, those DHS regulations expire in October 2009, and Congress is laying the groundwork for legislation next year to make the plant security rule permanent. But a draft chemical plant security bill floated by House Democrats is raising concerns in the chemical industry. Among other things, the bill would require facilities designated as "high risk" to adopt inherently safer technologies (IST), such as using smaller quantities of toxic substances or lowering operating temperatures. Currently, DHS cannot mandate IST. The DHS assistant secretary for infrastructure protection told the panel that the current regulations are sufficiently protective. He also noted that DHS has the authority to impose heavy fines and even shut down noncompliant facilities. However, the vice president of the International Chemical Workers Council called the existing chemical security program "woefully inadequate" and said major changes should include an IST requirement and explicit language allowing states to craft antiterrorism programs that go beyond the federal standards.

Source: <http://pubs.acs.org/cen/news/85/i51/8551notw3.html>

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Nuclear Reactors, Materials, and Waste Sector

6. *December 17, Tri-City Herald* – (Washington) **DOE study compares 4 treatment methods.** Adding radioactive waste treatment capabilities beyond those planned at Hanford's vitrification plant would save money, get leak-prone waste tanks emptied sooner, and speed treatment, according to a draft of a new Department of Energy study. "The report definitely told us they need that second facility," said the tank waste disposal project manager for the Washington State Department of Ecology, the regulatory agency for the project. Hanford DOE officials already were preparing a business case evaluation for top DOE officials in Washington, D.C., on how to treat

low-activity radioactive waste when a Government Accountability Office report in June raised questions about treatment. The GAO report to Congress said DOE should reassess whether bulk vitrification, a proposed supplemental treatment method, is needed to treat radioactive waste, given the escalating costs of studying the process. The DOE case study will help provide a response to Congress on that question. The study looked at four ways to supplement waste treatment capabilities at the \$12.2 billion vitrification plant as it currently is designed and being constructed. The plant is designed to treat all high-level radioactive waste among the 53 million gallons of waste stored in Hanford's underground tanks. But it is planned to treat only half of the low-activity radioactive waste, which accounts for 90 percent of the waste by volume but has just 5 percent of the tank waste's total radionuclides. The study assumed treating the high level-waste left from production of plutonium would take 27 years. Without expansion of the plant or a supplemental treatment method, treating the low-activity waste would take 60 years, a time span that cannot be justified, the study said.

Source: <http://www.tri-cityherald.com/tch/local/story/9524882p-9435655c.html>

7. *December 16, Detroit News* – (Michigan) **DTE Energy moves forward with plans to store spent nuclear fuel.** DTE Energy Co. has signed a \$62.5 million contract with a company to deal with the mounting problem of storing spent nuclear fuel from its Fermi 2 power plant near Monroe, Michigan. Within three years, the Detroit-based utility plans to be storing the radioactive waste in sealed cylindrical casks on concrete pads outside the plant's walls, the Monroe Evening News reported. The utility said Tuesday it signed the contract with Marlton, New Jersey-based Holtec International Inc. to provide a dozen 20-foot-tall cylinders that will hold stainless steel vessels encasing the used nuclear fuel bundles. The facility should be ready to use in 2009, but the first fuel probably will not be loaded until 2010, said a DTE spokesman. The contract with Holtec includes related equipment and services, and the cost of loading the fuel into the casks. "This is a pretty common means for storage these days," he said. "We've been looking at it for several years and looking at a variety of systems." Holtec's sales and marketing manager said the casks they supply exceed federal standards, are in use at 14 sites in the United States, where 193 already are loaded with used fuel. For years, DTE has been predicting that outside fuel storage at its plant near Lake Erie would be necessary because it is running out of room for spent fuel assemblies in a cooling fuel pool inside the plant. DTE also has said it is facing the storage problem because a federal site for handling waste has not been developed.

Source:

<http://www.detnews.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20071216/UPDATE/712160340>

8. *December 15, Associated Press* – (Michigan) **Feds: DTE mishandled Fermi 2 damage response.** Federal regulators say in a report that DTE Energy mishandled the response to the discovery of several holes in steam lines at the Fermi 2 nuclear power plant near Monroe, Michigan. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission says the utility broke several federal rules and failed to follow its own emergency response plan in October. Details of the report were published by the Monroe Evening News. The NRC previously said that a mistake by a contractor apparently caused the holes at the plant, which had been shut down for scheduled maintenance. DTE says it is thoroughly evaluating all the issues and

implementing procedures to address them.

Source:

<http://detnews.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20071215/UPDATE/712150422/1361>

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Defense Industrial Base Sector

9. *December 17, Washington Technology* – (National) **GD to build more Marine Corps operations centers.** General Dynamics Corp. will provide the principal components for six combat operations centers geared for high-level Marine Corps commanders under a \$38 million contract modification. Under the contract modification, General Dynamics C4 Systems will provide 12 common modules and 24 capability sets for the six operations centers. Through a contract awarded in 2002, General Dynamics has received orders for 220 combat operations centers for Marine commanders at the battalion and regimental levels. The new order will equip the major subordinate commands of the Marine Corps with the same command-and-control capabilities already provided to those lower echelons. The combat operations centers “enable Marines to stay connected and quickly move from place to place with standardized equipment and operating system,” said the vice president of battle management systems at General Dynamic C4 Systems. The operations centers include networked workstations and servers that support tactical data systems and other mission-critical software, as well as voice, data, and voice-over-IP communications. To field the technology requires a variety of hardware such as tents, trailers, radios, and power generators that house the technology in rugged battlefield conditions.

Source: http://www.washingtontechnology.com/online/1_1/31982-1.html

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Banking and Finance Sector

10. *December 17, News & Observer* – (North Carolina) **Car warranty scam preys on seniors.** A car warranty scam is growing statewide, according to the North Carolina attorney general (AG). Scammers are calling residents, especially seniors, and sending them postcards claiming that their warranties are about to expire, the AG wrote in a recent news release. “They want to pressure you into buying an expensive car warranty,” said the official, whose office is investigating the postcards and calls. The messages include phrases such as “motor vehicle notification,” “final notice” or “priority level: high” to make the offer seem urgent, the news release said. When recipients call the number listed, they are pressured to buy an expensive extended warranty for their car and told they must make a down payment before they can get information about the warranty.

Source: <http://www.newsobserver.com/news/story/833731.html>

11. *December 16, Times Daily* – (Alabama) **Tax scam targeting elderly.** The president of the North Alabama Better Business Bureau announced that a tax scam is circulating throughout Alabama that is targeting older residents. She said residents are being

contacted by people claiming to be with the Internal Revenue Service or the Social Security Administration. A media specialist with the IRS in Nashville, said people are encouraged to be wary if anyone approaches them about filing for a tax refund by using Social Security retirement or disability benefits. He said older residents and others may be targeted directly by the scam artists or may be encouraged to participate in the scam by people who “innocently believe it to be legitimate.” He said that based on information his office has received, the scam is operating mainly in Choctaw, Lamar, Pickens, Sumter, and Washington counties in Alabama.

Source: <http://www.timesdaily.com/article/20071216/NEWS/712160355/1011>

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Transportation Sector

12. *December 17, USA Today* – (National) **Engine blast spurs debate on safety standards.**

A recent midair jet engine failure that sent metal chunks exploding with violent force is prompting federal investigators to debate the need for tougher engine safety standards. Some metal pieces thrown by the engine peppered the side of a Southwest Airlines Boeing 737-300, according to federal safety investigators. Investigators are interested in this particular case, because preliminary evidence indicates that pieces of fan blades and other metal parts flew around the armored shield that is designed to prevent engine debris from escaping, the National Transportation Safety Board spokesman said. The investigation has only just begun, but one possible outcome is a finding that existing protections on engines are not sufficient to prevent metal shards from being flung out of a damaged engine. Though explosive engine failures are extremely rare, they have caused several notable fatal crashes, such as the July 19, 1989, incident when 111 people died in Sioux City, Iowa, when an engine on a United Airlines DC-10 exploded, rendering the jet uncontrollable.

Source: http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2007-12-16-explodingengine_N.htm?loc=interstitialskip

13. *December 16, WSFB 3 Hartford* – (Connecticut) **Icy conditions closes Wilbur Cross.**

Following a winter storm combining snow, sleet, freezing rain, and rain, Connecticut state police reported responding to 120 crashes on Sunday, 11 of which involved injuries. State police also said troopers reported to as many as 40 spinout calls. Authorities closed Wilbur Cross Parkway from Woodbridge to New Haven in both directions to allow crews to treat the roadway.

Source: <http://www.wfsb.com/news/14867469/detail.html>

14. *December 15, Orlando Sentinel* – (Florida) **Stretch of 408 reopened.** Authorities have reopened the East-West Expressway in Florida after determining that a suspicious package found Friday afternoon on Pine Hills Road underneath the overpass was not a danger. East and west bound lanes were shut down when someone spotted the package and called authorities. Traffic was detoured to State Road 50 and surrounding streets. A sheriff's team was called in to inspect the package after a police dog picked up a scent.

Source: http://www.orlandosentinel.com/news/local/orange/orl-bk-408close121507_0,1862651.story

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Postal and Shipping Sector

Nothing to report.

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Agriculture and Food Sector

15. *December 17, Miami Herald* – (Florida; Georgia) **Water crisis threatens Apalachicola oysters.** The worst drought in years coupled with the water needs of booming Atlanta is leaving its scars on the people, animals, and the Apalachicola River. That worries the 1,100 oystermen in Florida because time, along with the water, is running out as the corps reduces flows to historically low levels for the country's fifth-biggest river by volume to spill into the Gulf of Mexico. About 10 percent of the oysters consumed in the nation and 90 percent of those eaten in Florida come from these waters.

Source: http://www.miamiherald.com/top_stories/story/347518.html

16. *December 16, Associated Press* – (West Virginia; National) **WV needs more funds for gypsy moth fight.** The assistant director for the state Department of Agriculture's forest health protection programs says next year's gypsy moth season could be West Virginia's worst. The number of acres defoliated by gypsy moths has steadily increased. This year 78,000 acres were harmed. The official predicts that number could easily reach 160,000 acres next year if dry conditions prevail. The state is about 79 percent forested and the damage to hardwood trees comes during May and June, when the gypsy moth caterpillars eat the leaves. Oak is the favorite target, but the caterpillars will eat about anything, including ornamental yard plantings. U.S. Forest Service estimates show that by 2015, the moth will cover an area stretching from Maine to Georgia and from Georgia to Minnesota. Mid-Atlantic states are expected to be particularly hard hit next year, said the official.

Source:

http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20071216/ap_on_sc/gypsy_moths;_ylt=AkzkIuAD0LQ45almm.3cpNCs0NUE

17. *December 15, Associated Press* – (National) **Senate approves \$268 billion agriculture bill.** The Senate approved a \$286 billion farm bill Thursday on a 79-14 vote, with expanded subsidies for growers and food stamps for the poor. The bill increases subsidies for wheat, barley, oats, soybeans, and several other crops, and it creates new grants for vegetable and fruit growers. It also increases loan rates for sugar producers, extends dairy programs and provides more dollars for renewable energy and conservation programs to protect environmentally sensitive farmland over the next five years. President Bush has threatened to veto the legislation, saying it costs too much and should instead be cutting subsidies at a time of record-high crop prices.

Source: http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/nation/bal-te.farmbill15dec15_0,5921368.story

Water Sector

18. *December 16, Fox News* – (California) **Los Angeles to drain two reservoirs due to cancer risk.** Two reservoirs supplying drinking water to parts of eastern and central Los Angeles were shut down after officials found them contaminated with high levels of the carcinogen bromate. The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power intends to drain 600 million gallons of water from Elysian and Silver Lake reservoirs early next year, a process that will leave them out of action for three to four months amid drought conditions, the department said in a statement. According to the department, high levels of the carcinogen were discovered by a commercial water customer during tests in early October. With the discovery surfacing while Southern California is in the midst of a drought, city officials said they would attempt to use some of the water for irrigation and other uses that do not involve human consumption. The rest will be dumped into the Los Angeles River, which drains into the Pacific Ocean. The bromate “formed unexpectedly when the water in the reservoir, combined with groundwater, was treated with chlorine and exposed to sunlight,” a DWP spokesman said in a statement in the Los Angeles Times, adding it was “the first time an occurrence like this has ever been observed.” He added that, “There is no immediate health risk.”

Source: <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,316970,00.html>

19. *December 16, Baltimore Sun* – (Maryland) **Harford water source change.** In the latest response to the impact that months of dry weather have had on water supplies, Harford County, Maryland, will change the source of its water supply this week from Loch Raven Reservoir to the Susquehanna River. Baltimore, which supplies water to Harford County, ordered the switch to help conserve the dwindling supplies in area reservoirs. Because of the prolonged dry spell in the summer and early fall, Loch Raven, Prettyboy, and Liberty reservoirs are at lower levels than normal for this time of year. Capacity in each is about 66 percent and falling, officials said. In January 2002, the last time the metropolitan area went to the Susquehanna for water, reservoir levels were at 42 percent.

Source: <http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/local/harford/bal-ha.water16dec16,0,5951347.story>

Public Health and Healthcare Sector

20. *December 17, Agence France Press* – (National; International) **US-made child meningitis vaccine recalled in China.** Over 100,000 doses of US-made vaccines for childhood meningitis have been recalled in China due to sterilization concerns, the Chinese government said. The U.S. pharmaceutical firm Merck and its China importer have recalled 104,930 doses of the vaccine as Merck cannot assure their sterility, the State Food and Drug Administration said in a statement posted on its website Sunday. The suspect vaccines were distributed from October to eight municipalities and

provinces, including Beijing, the statement said. The announcement in China is part of a global recall launched by Merck last week of 13 lots of the vaccine, which involved reportedly about one million doses.

Source:

http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20071217/ts_alt_afp/chinauspharmacompanydrugsrecall_071217070038;_ylt=AhOh6YGSCtNlce25bWSVVQLYa7gF

21. *December 17, Associated Press* – (International) **WHO to investigate Pakistan bird flu.** International health experts have been dispatched to Pakistan to help investigate the cause of South Asia's first outbreak of bird flu in people and to determine if the virus could have been transmitted through human contact, officials said Sunday. Four brothers - two of whom died - and two cousins from Abbotabad, a small city about 30 miles north of Islamabad, were suspected of being infected by the H5N1 virus, said a World Health Organization spokesman in Geneva. A man and his niece from the same area, who had slaughtered chickens, were also suspected of having the virus. Another person, in a separate case, who slaughtered poultry in nearby Mansehra, 15 miles away, also tested positive for the disease, he said. Specimens were never collected from one of the brothers who died, and many of those who tested positive experienced only mild symptoms and were not hospitalized, said the spokesman. The WHO has not ruled out limited human-to-human transmission. People who came into contact with those infected in Pakistan are being monitored, the WHO said.

Source: <http://apnews.myway.com/article/20071216/D8TIGLV00.html>

Government Facilities Sector

22. *December 15, Associated Press* – (International) **Thousands march in latest protest against larger US base in Vicenza, Italy.** Thousands of demonstrators marched peacefully Saturday in the northern Italian city of Vicenza in the latest protest against a planned expansion of a U.S. military base there. Premier Romano Prodi's center-left government has approved the expansion, going ahead with the project despite angry objections from far-left coalition allies, Greens, and Communists. The Ederle base has about 2,900 active duty military personnel. The expansion at the Dal Molin airport, on the other side of town, would allow the U.S. military to move four battalions now based in Germany, raising the number to 5,000.

Source: <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/22273743/>

23. *December 15, Los Angeles Times* – (California) **Plot posed a real, immediate threat, experts say.** The guilty pleas announced Friday in what is known as the JIS case represented an important win for the Justice Department. The case posed a real and immediate threat, as the audacious scheme to attack more than a dozen military centers, synagogues, and other sites in Southern California was within 60 days of launching, according to sources close to the investigation. In a matter of weeks, the FBI, Los Angeles, and Torrance police departments and two dozen other agencies conducted 19 searches, seized two dozen computer hard drives, and examined about 53,000 documents, all without the normal luxury of moving at their own pace with undercover

informants, surveillance, and wiretaps. The plotters “were flying dangerously below the radar,” said the L.A. police department’s counter-terrorism head at the time the case broke. He added that the defendants had robbed gas stations for the money to buy rifles, had picked their targets, and had set a date. The prison-hatched scheme raised another fear in U.S. counter-terrorism circles, particularly within California, which has the nation’s largest inmate population, that there were other members of the conspiracy preparing to carry on the plan. More than 350 federal agents, state investigators, and local police worked five weeks, around the clock, to determine if others had escaped their dragnet. In the end, they did not find additional accomplices, but their investigation led to new intelligence coordination between prison officials and outside law enforcement.

Source: http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-analysis15dec15_0,5411928.story?coll=la-home-center

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Emergency Services Sector

24. *December 17, Security Products Online* – (Iowa) **Mobile data system allows info sharing between police, fire personnel in Iowa town.** BIO-key International Inc. recently announced a new-customer contract award from the City of Dubuque, Iowa, fire department for MobileRescue, BIO-key’s wireless messaging and data exchange solution for fire and emergency response. By using MobileRescue, Dubuque’s fire department personnel are now better able to track, deploy, and manage resources using laptops, installed in the agency’s ambulances and command vehicles, as well as desktop computers, used by shift commanders. MobileRescue also allows Dubuque County’s 911 Center to quickly and efficiently dispatch fire apparatus and rescue units to incidents and to communicate with responders while en route and on scene.
Source: <http://www.secprodonline.com/articles/56797/>
25. *December 16, Associated Press* – (Texas) **Emergency evacuees in Texas must submit to criminal background checks.** Texans who board evacuation buses during hurricanes or other emergencies must now submit to criminal background checks, the state’s emergency management director said. The policy is an effort to keep sex offenders and fugitives from boarding evacuation buses with children, the elderly, and the disabled, the chief of the state’s Division of Emergency Management told the Houston Chronicle, which posted the article on its Web site Saturday. He said that sex offenders or other criminals would be evacuated on different buses. “We’re not going to leave anyone,” he said. The intent, he said, is to make sure that vulnerable residents are not victimized. He also said that state officials would be able to segregate evacuees, even in the chaos of an emergency. “We’ll have procedures,” he said, “and we’re not going to advertise what they are.” Under the plan, anyone who boards must provide a name. Officials can ask for photo identification, but it is not needed to board, he explained. Officials will check names against sex offender registries and other criminal databases, he said. After Hurricane Katrina, about 1,700 parolees did not check in with the authorities in Texas, Mississippi, and Louisiana.
Source: <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,317017,00.html>

Information Technology

26. *December 17, vnunet.com* – (International) **Sharp hike in cyber-attacks from China.**

Security experts have warned of a sharp hike in malicious activity coming out of China. Finjan has examined the new wave of Chinese attacks and the mechanisms used and claims to have identified an “intricate network of connections” between China-based servers run by cyber-criminals. The security firm has discovered that the entry points that initiate the attack on users “in the wild” exist all over the world and are eventually associated with servers registered as Chinese domains. The attackers are spreading the assaults by placing entry points on a variety of websites in different regions and listed differently by URL categorization engines. The infection consists of either an Iframe or a Script tag placed on the website that causes users visiting the site to be attacked. Examples for such entry point regions are shown in Finjan’s December 2007 Malicious Page of the Month Report, and were found on trusted websites in the U.S., China, and Western Europe, including government and education sites. After the victim reaches an entry point, the attackers use dynamic code obfuscation methods to limit signature-based technologies from detecting the attack. The victim is redirected to a series of sites containing Iframes that will eventually force the victim to visit a site that belongs to the Chinese network. In the first part of the actual malicious attack, the cyber-criminals use new or known exploits that will infect the victim with a crimeware Trojan. “After the initial Trojan is loaded it initiates the downloading of other Trojans from different locations. The compromised computer will then redirect to other sites in order to send statistical information about the infected PC,” the firm stated. “Finjan has discovered that different Trojans send encoded information to the same sites in China that we identified as being unique to the attack.”

Source: <http://www.vnunet.com/vnunet/news/2205903/sharp-hike-cyber-attacks-china>

27. *December 15, Computerworld* – (National) **Apple fixes 18 flaws in Tiger’s Java.**

Apple Inc. has updated Java for Mac OS X 10.4, also known as Tiger, to patch 18 different vulnerabilities, including some fixed as long ago as May by Java’s maker, Sun Microsystems Inc. Apple’s newest operating system, dubbed Leopard, does not need to be patched because it includes the updated Java components. According to the accompanying advisory, Tiger’s Java, Java 1.4, and Java 2 Standard Edition 5.0 contain flaws that in some cases could lead to what Apple called “arbitrary code execution,” which means that attackers may be able to insert their own malware during an exploit and/or gain complete control of the machine. Unlike rivals such as Microsoft Corp., Apple does not rank or rate its security updates to give users an idea of the severity of the bugs. Among the 18 vulnerabilities was one discovered by 3com Corp.’s TippingPoint unit in June 2006 and another reported to Sun in October 2006 by a member of Google Inc.’s security team. TippingPoint’s flaw was fixed in January 2007, and the Google-reported bug was patched by Sun in May 2007. In both instances, updates were made available at the time for the Java components used by Windows, Linux and Solaris. But because Apple crafts the Java runtime for Mac OS X, its users were left unprotected an additional eleven and seven months, respectively. However, no

exploits using either bug were reported during that time.

Source:

http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&taxonomyName=security&articleId=9053198&taxonomyId=17&intsrc=kc_top

Internet Alert Dashboard

To report cyber infrastructure incidents or to request information, please contact US-CERT at soc@us-cert.gov or visit their Website: www.us-cert.gov.

Information on IT information sharing and analysis can be found at the IT ISAC (Information Sharing and Analysis Center) Website: <https://www.it-isac.org/>.

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Communications Sector

28. *December 17, Broadbandreports.com* – (National) **Access problems caused by technical glitch, not net neutrality violation.** When T-Mobile Customers could not access the blog hosting website Twitter over the weekend, bloggers assumed T-Mobile had blocked the site as policy and violated network neutrality. But according to Twitter, the problem was a technical one and has now been resolved. According to broadbandreports.com, last year BellSouth users complained they could not access MySpace and YouTube, leading some to issue cries of network-neutrality violation. As it turns out, the problem was completely unintentional routing issue. Similar cries of network neutrality wolf have been commonplace; Cox users who were unable to surf craigslist.com thought it was a secret Cox cabal to stop them from selling their junk (it was flaky security software), and Comcast users who could not reach Google assumed the worst (it was a DNS glitch). Some industry watchers have stressed user patience before accusing providers of policy-driven neutrality violations.

Source: <http://www.dslreports.com/shownews/Crying-Network-Neutrality-Wolf-90278>

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Commercial Facilities Sector

29. *December 16, KUTV 2 Utah* – (National) **Bomb scare gridlocks downtown SLC on busy night.** Authorities closed State Street just before 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, after a suspicious briefcase was found at the Chase Bank building in Salt Lake City. The road was closed and bomb squad technicians were summoned after an officer saw what he believed to be wiring inside the briefcase. A robot eventually opened the case but nothing dangerous was found inside. Officials later learned that a maintenance worker left the briefcase at the building. Traffic was detoured around the area for almost three hours.

Source: http://www.kutv.com/news/local/story.aspx?content_id=f4784305-46a1-4fcc-9d07-bcdff531af15

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National Monuments & Icons Sector

30. *December 16, CNN* – (California) **2 Malibu fire suspects turn themselves in.** Two men suspected of setting a fire that destroyed dozens of Malibu homes last month have turned themselves in to authorities, the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department said Sunday. Authorities said these men and three others that are still being held in custody were drinking in a popular party spot in a cave at Malibu State Park when they started the fire. The Los Angeles County sheriff said investigators traced the fire to the cave, then used receipts and surveillance camera footage from a nearby store to track down the men. All five face felony charges of unlawfully causing a fire that resulted in great bodily injury, unlawfully causing a fire that affected an inhabited structure and arson during a state of emergency.

Source: <http://www.cnn.com/2007/US/12/16/malibu.fire.suspects/index.html>

31. *December 15, Peninsula Daily News* – (Washington) **Olympic National Forest storm damage totals \$8 million.** The December 2-3 storm that hit western Washington spewed more than 14 inches of rain and wind gusts of more than 40 mph. As of December 14, preliminary damage estimates in the Olympic National Forest totaled \$8 million. Restoring access to all roads in the Pacific Ranger District may take up to a year, said a Pacific District ranger. The recreation program manager for the Pacific Ranger District said, "Trails and interpretative trails have been devastated in the Forks and Quinault areas." Road washouts - which included the Lake Cushman Causeway - exposed power and telephone cables and creeks created new stream channels across many roads.

Source: <http://www.peninsuladailynews.com/article/20071216/NEWS/712160305>

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Dams Sector

32. *December 17, Reuters* – (International) **Truck bomb explodes near Iraq's largest dam.** A truck packed with explosives blew up on Monday close to Iraq's largest dam, partly destroying the main access bridge and killing a policeman, police said. The blast caused no damage to the Mosul Dam itself, which U.S. Army engineers have previously warned is poorly constructed and in danger of imminent collapse. An engineer at the dam said a section of the 820-foot long metal bridge, which is about .6 miles from the dam, had been destroyed in the explosion.

Source: <http://www.reuters.com/article/featuredCrisis/idUSCOL750660>

33. *December 16, Herald-Citizen* – (Kentucky) **Wolf Creek Dam study released.** A final environmental impact statement regarding repairs of Wolf Creek Dam in Kentucky has been released by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The statement -- which essentially says the lowering of Lake Cumberland to reduce stress on the dam will have significant environmental impacts -- says lake levels will need to continue to stay down because the consequences of dam failure are so enormous they outweigh the anticipated negative impacts to the environment. Lowering and maintaining a reduced pool would have

negative effects on hydropower, water supply, recreation, water quality, fish and wildlife management, threatened and endangered species and navigation. The report outlines seven alternatives, two of which have not been considered, and two that have been considered as preferred and are currently being implemented.

Source: <http://www.herald-citizen.com/index.cfm?event=news.view&id=DF80AC7A-19B9-E2E2-675A22A190F95930>

34. *December 15, Azzaman* – (International) **Armed group wants to blow up Mosul Dam.**

Security officials say scores of armed men have entered the Province of Nineveh with orders to detonate Mosul Dam. “Some 250 armed men have entered Nineveh Province with the aim of detonating the Mosul Dam,” one source said. Last month, the U.S. Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR) warned that the dam was the most dangerous in the world and its foundations could give away any moment. The Iraqi government has dismissed the warning, describing SIGIR’s remarks as inaccurate and “totally untrue.” The sources said the government feared the rebels would seized on SIGIR’s warning to attack the dam and cause massive damage and casualties to downstream cities and towns particularly Mosul. The government is reported to have sent more reinforcements to the area. The sources said the rebels might delay an attack on the dam until May when the reservoir is almost full with the melting of snow on Turkish mountains.

Source: <http://www.azzaman.com/english/index.asp?fname=news%5C2007-12-15%5Ckurd.htm>

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*** With December 24 being announced as a Federal Holiday there will not be a DHS Daily Report disseminated on Monday, December 24. The weekend report will be disseminated on December 26.**

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